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ABSTRACT

Parents, teachers, and peers play significant roles in a child's development of self-esteem. This report describes a program for improving the self-esteem of fourth-grade students in a large, multi-ethnic suburb. The researcher documented the students' low self-esteem through teacher observations and by the administration of a student self-esteem fitness profile. Analysis of the probable cause data revealed that most students exhibited deficiencies in emotional security, were intolerant of errors, felt little satisfaction when speaking of feelings, feared for their safety, and lacked role models and significant others who conveyed to them appreciation for their uniqueness. Some solution strategies suggested by experts, combined with analysis of the problem setting, resulted in two major categories of intervention: (1) creation of a learning environment conducive to the enhancement of self-esteem; and (2) implementation of daily lessons on various components of self-esteem. Post-program measures revealed that the number of students feeling a lack of emotional security and belonging decreased, while students feeling a lack of competence and purpose remained the same. The data showed the benefits of providing a learning environment conducive to the enhancement of self-esteem. Seventeen appendices list log entries, survey results, and evaluation forms. Contains 67 references. (RJM)

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ED 375 370

IMPROVING STUDENT SELF-ESTEEM THROUGH CHANGES IN THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

by

*Betsy Rugen

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Master's of Arts in Teaching and Leadership

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Saint Xavier University - IRI
Field-Based Master's Program

CG025823

Action Research Final Report
Site: Wheeling, IL
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Abstract

AUTHOR: Betsy Rugen SITE: Wheeling
DATE: May, 1994

TITLE: Improving Self-Esteem Through Changes in the Learning Environment

ABSTRACT: This report describes a program for improving the self-esteem of fourth grade students, in a large, multi-ethnic, socioeconomically diverse, northern suburb of a large midwestern city. The problem was documented by teacher observation and confirmed throught the administration of a student self-esteem fitness profile.

Analysis of the probable cause data revealed that a majority of students showed deficiencies in emotional security, were unable to tolerate errors, felt little satisfaction when speaking of feelings, lacked role models, lacked significant others who conveyed to them appreciation for their uniqueness and lacked role models who handled pressure in appropriate ways. In addition, a sense of physical safety is lacking in many students. Their well being is threatened or not supervised closely enough, their insignificant physical ailments are played upon excessively by adults, and unhealthful choices are made for their physical development. Evidence also showed that students lacked of one or more of these essential ingredients of self-esteem: identity, belonging, competence, and purpose.

Solution strategies suggested by knowledgeable others, combined with analysis of the problem setting, resulted in the selection of two major categories of intervention: creating a learning environment conducive to the enhancement of self-esteem, and implementing daily lessons on various components of self-esteem.

Reduction of deficiencies were evident for those items relating to the school environment. Evidence showed that the number of students feeling a lack of physical safety and identity increased, those feeling a lack of emotional security and belonging decreased and those feeling a lack of competence and purpose remained the same.

Chapter 1

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM AND DESCRIPTION OF CONTEXT

Problem Statement

A fourth grade class at Andrews Elementary School exhibits deficiency in self-esteem as evidenced by student self-esteem fitness profiles, anecdotal records, and teacher observation.

Description of Immediate Problem Setting

Andrews Elementary School was built in 1920 and named for a suffragette. It is a K-5 school located in a northern suburb of a large midwestern city. The area's socio-economic status is one of upper middle class. Education is valued and supported by a very active P.T.A.

Andrews is comprised of seventeen regular education "homerooms" and two classes for children who as classified as behavior disordered. All students are assigned to a homeroom. Grades K-2 are self-contained. Grade 4 is ability grouped for math, while grades 3 and

5 are ability grouped for reading and math; children remain in their homerooms for all other subjects.

Andrews also houses three ESL/Bilingual resource rooms, two learning disability resource rooms, a reading specialist's classroom, as well as offices for the psychologist, social worker, health clerk, secretary and principal. In addition, areas are provided for special classes such as: art, music, drama, physical education, library skills, computer skills, and instrumental music. These areas are used before school or at lunch time for chorus, German, and Spanish instruction. Space is tight; overcrowding is an issue.

Approximately 378 students have been enrolled for the 1993-1994 school year. The rate of mobility is just over 14 percent. The attendance rate is close to 95 percent. Twenty-three percent of students come from low income families. Nineteen percent are considered limited English proficient.

The majority of the children walk to Andrews, as it is their neighborhood school. Some are bused from the close outskirts of the area, the bilingual students are bused from all sections of the city, and other children are bused from the western portion of the suburb around Hoffman High School, the lowest socioeconomic area in the city.

Most of the students were born in the United States. Almost 20 percent, however, are not U.S. citizens. Andrews welcomes children from 23 Asian and European countries. Approximately 55 percent of the children are White, 28 percent are Black, one percent are Hispanic, and 16 percent are Asian/Pacific Islander.

Andrews teachers' ethnic backgrounds vary, also. The majority are White, although Black and Asian/Pacific Islander are represented. The average teaching experience is 17 years. One-half of the faculty have a Master's degree. The principal is a white male. He evaluates every teacher and ancillary staff member. There are no assistants or "team leaders."

As stated, Andrews is rich in ethnic and socioeconomic diversity. Children are readily mainstreamed from the behavior classes, as Regular Education Initiative is a major focus. The Andrews community takes great pride in its global and inclusionary views for quality education.

Description of Surrounding Community

Andrews School is one of ten (K-5) elementary schools in Hoffman School District #55. In addition, the district includes one (K-8) magnet school, three

(6-8) middle schools, and one special education school which serves children ages three to 21, who function in the moderate to severe range of retardation. The total enrollment this school year is 6,654.

Hoffman has a population of 73,233; 71 percent are White, 23 percent are Black, five percent are Asian/Pacific Islander, and two percent are classified "other." The median family income, as reported by the 1990 census is $53,625, and per capita income is $22,364. The per capita income of Blacks, however, is $11,643.

Eighty-two percent of Hoffmannites are over the age of 18. The educational attainment of these adults varies: four percent received an eighth grade diploma, six percent did not complete high school, 14 percent graduated from high school, 27 percent received Bachelor's degrees, 22 percent have a graduate or professional degree, and the rest attained some college, but didn't graduate. Most remarkable, is that 80 percent of the graduate and undergraduate degrees are held by Whites, while Blacks hold 3.5 percent.

Children under the age of eighteen live within a variety of family structures. Intact families inhabit the majority of homes. Twenty-three percent of families, however, live in one parent households.

The people of this community and this school district are extremely interdependent. Ownership radiates in all directions. The vast majority of people paying taxes to support District #55 do not have children currently enrolled, many never have, but all pay the highest possible tax rate allowed at this time. As a result, the actions of the board of education are closely monitored and community input is regularly submitted to the editor of the local paper.

Hoffman is rich in heritage. Hoffmannites who were born and schooled there decades ago, recultivate their senses of pride in "their community." The school board understands well its need to listen to all opinions and make decisions based on equity for all children.

Before 1960, District #55 operated as a school system which segregated students and teachers along racial lines. In the '60s, segregation was determined unacceptable and quality integrated education was promoted. A decline in enrollment closed four schools in the late '70s.

In keeping with its commitment to quality education and in order to avoid desegregation of schools due to changing housing patterns, the board in the '80s, defined guidelines to maintain racial balance.

At this time, increasing student enrollment and changing housing patterns are causing schools to be out of compliance with the 60% guideline which states, "No defined racial group shall exceed 60 percent of a school population." Due to this, a long range planning committee, which included people from every segment of the community, was appointed. They met weekly for the past two years and studied desegregation plans from around the nation. From these data, the board has recently instructed the superintendent to create several school reorganization models.

This very vocal community holds dear its' view of quality integrated education. Major questions consistently face each board of education. Both groups work diligently to find solutions. Racial imbalance is always a consideration. Increasing enrollment is another major concern, as many of the schools are now overcrowded. Five hundred new students are projected to be enrolled by 1996, bringing the total to 7,200. In dealing with these two issues, the board of education is currently scheduling community meetings to discuss the issue of school reorganization.

Regional and National Context of the Problem

Self-esteem is a personal assessment of one's worth. Pervading every aspect of personality, it is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. Self-esteem evolves from and can fluctuate due to various influences.

> Self-esteem comes from sources external to the person as well as from within the individual. Parents provide the primary source of sense of self. The second most powerful influence on self-esteem comes from teachers, and peers are the third most powerful. (California Task Force, 1990; Hoffman et al., 1988), as cited by (Krupp, 1992, p.164).

Children learn about themselves while simultaneously learning about their world and their relation to it. Many children may be at risk in terms of developing a positive self-esteem.

> The simple fact is...that youngsters today are not receiving enough positive, nurturing attention from adults, either at home or at school. The reasons are numerous and complex, but the result is that more and more students have low levels of self-esteem. (Canfield, 1990, p.49).

Development of self-esteem is a primary prerequisite to learning. It has been found that success in school is affected by self-esteem regardless of the child's level of intelligence. (PTA, 1987)

Establishing an environment which is consistent in nurturing and honoring the unique worth of each individual child is a challenge facing society today. Educators have the opportunity to bring inclusionary philosophies and innovative methods to their classroom environments; ways to bring about increases in positive self-esteem.

Chapter 2

PROBLEM EVIDENCE AND PROBABLE CAUSE

Problem Background

As pointed out in Chapter 1, there are numerous and complex reasons for low self-esteem in youngsters. Because self-esteem is learned, parents, teachers and peers play significant roles in a child's development of self.

Our society is permeated with actions which exemplify a low sense of self. Behaviors can be seen in our classrooms which show a child's self-worth is tentative or deficient.

School districts all over the country are creating curricula on self-esteem. The focus of many is at the middle school level, zeroing in on the adolescent "self." The state of California has a self-esteem task force which involves the entire state in a promotion of self-esteem and personal responsibility.

California seems to be unique in its' statewide study of the problem. To my knowledge, our state and school district currently have no formal self-esteem

curriculum in place. In the past, however, the district had attempted such a program at the middle school level.

Problem Evidence

Both subjective and objective means were used to document evidence of self-esteem deficiencies. A six part self-esteem fitness profile (Appendix A) was administered to a class of 25 fourth graders, two of which are mainstreamed from an intermediate behavior disorder class for special school and grade level activites and for this study. A study of each students' anecdotal records including their cumulative folder and any confidential special services reports to date were read. Evidence was also noted by teacher observation which occurred the first six weeks of the school year.

The student profiles indicated that there were deficiencies in all six components of self-esteem. The components noted from greatest to least in terms of number of students showing possible deficiencies are:

1) emotional security...14 students
2) physical safety.....9 students
3) belonging.....6 students
   purpose.....6 students
4) identity.....5 students
5) competence.....3 students

Anecdotal data reveals that one-fifth of the students have had full case study evaluations done, three students have spent or are spending at least on year in a self-contained behavior disorder classroom, two students receive direct instruction from a learning disablitity teacher, three students receive speech therapy, four students see the school social worker weekly, and six students' achievement is below grade level in reading and math. In addition, documentation of weaknesses in productive work and study habits exists for one-fourth of the class.

Since the beginning of the school year, students have been observed exhibiting periodic tendencies of perfectionism, inattentiveness, apathy, avoidance, withdrawl, acting out verbally, acting out physically, intimidation, immaturity, and depression.

It has also been observed that two of the 23 students who are in the regular (not B.D.) education setting all day stand out in terms of need. Both have very consistent personal agendas. One does whatever he can to physically set himself apart from the rest of the group. The other constantly says, "I can't," out loud before attempting anything and displays a mean facial expression and a temper tantrum with the slightest bit of what he perceives is failure.

A summary of the data suggests that some of the students are deficient in one or more component of self-esteem, emotional security and physical safety being most notable. Students' past school history and present behaviors verify a need for implementation of this project.

Probable Cause of Problem

Sources for data to indicate probable cause factors gathered at the site included: cumulative folders, psychological reports, social work histories, teacher observation, ability grouping class lists, emergency card information, free lunch records, student journal entries, parent self-esteem profiles, community newspaper, and log of teacher contact with individual students, parents, colleagues, principal, and community workers. (Appendix B)

A summary of the probable cause data gathered from the site affirms that there are various reasons that could be causing deficiencies in the self-esteem of this population. The earliest influence on the development of a child's self-esteem is his home environment. The child's parents are the first to convey messages of "self." School provides the second most influential setting. Community awareness follows.

Miscellaneous family data collected found that: one-fourth of the families are not intact, one-fifth of the students go to day care either before or after school or both, one-half say they do not have a parent there when the child arrives home after school, all but four parents work outside the home, one-third have changed residences more than twice, four students have changed schools more than twice, one student has had five different schools in five years, one-fifth receive a free lunch at school daily, one-half go to bed later than 9:00 P.M., one-fourth have no siblings.

Of the 25 families, 20 handed in the parent self-esteem fitness profile (Appendix C) explained and given to them at Open House. Sixteen were handed in on time, one one day late, one three days late, one eight days late, and one five weeks late. Three failed to answer the third and last page, while one completed

only the first page. This profile asked parents their viewpoints on a range of issues dealing with each of the aspects of self-esteem.

The number of issues concerning possible deficiencies in the six components listed, from greatest to least, were: emotional security, physical safety, and identity. Belonging, competence and purpose had no distinguishable deficiencies.

Notable issues of physical safety were health concerns and lack of exercise. The inability to laugh at self and think positively, along with sharing major family stress with the child were the emotional security deficits. The identity component deficit dealt with buying the latest clothes and gadgets.

At school, these children were abililty grouped for reading and math last year. This year they are "tracked" only for math. The fourth grade teachers were hoping to be totally self-contained, but plans were changed one week prior to the opening of school, due to having one class reconfigured to a split grade of 3/4. The children are used to having ability labels included as part of their student identity.

In past school settings, negative attention getting techniques have worked for some of the students. In addition, some have been indulged or "enabled" - fallen from expectations with little

consequences or having to meet no expectations at all. At this time, listening with eye contact, putting forth sufficient effort, and completing tasks are work habits which are lacking for many.

Recently, the community has been the focus of news concerning two shootings of school age girls. Gang crimes are a part of life for many who attend our school. Fear for physical safety is a valid concern. Children on the playground or at lunch are heard speaking about the latest news in the community. They want to tell what they've heard; they are animated, as they do. Time for discussion, calming down and refocusing is needed.

While parents' responses were unanimous that the school is a safe place, one-fifth stated that their neighborhood was not. The children felt relatively safe at school and in their neighborhoods. Almost half, however, said that they were afraid of someone at school and someone in their neighborhood.

A summary of the probable cause data gathered from the site showed that these students have lived in a world which offers them blatant realities of family, school and societal situations which they must face and deal with as best they can.

At home, some have dealt with lack of available role models, little time to spend with parents, high rates of residential mobility, lack of exercise, negative thought patterns, materialism, and consistent knowledge of major family stress.

At school, some have faced labeling, tracking, lack of expectation, intimidation, and role models who have to deal with sudden change, unexpected events, and an ever-increasing, emotionally draining load of responsibilities.

In the community, some have viewed and heard criminal activity taking place, some have had their homes and families fall victim to crime, and some have had family members in trouble themselves.

Probable cause data from the literature was vast. It was found that people having low self-esteem usually own one or more deficiencies in the vital components of self-esteem. Physical safety, emotional security, identity, and belonging, are determined early in life, largely by influences from parents and adults. Competence and purpose develop in high school, essentially by the child himself (Youngs, 1992).

Self-esteem can't be enhanced until the basic human needs of food, water, rest, air, safety, shelter, clothing and protection from physical and emotional harm and disease are met. The effects of low self-esteem create a vicious cycle which becomes more difficult to break the older one gets. The cycle can result in low motivation which prevents effective learning (Soderberg, 1993).

Self-esteem can fluctuate as circumstances do.

> In general, positive experiences and fulfilling relationships help raise self-esteem. Negative experiences and troubled relationships tend to lower self-esteem. No single event or person can determine your level of self-esteem. It develops over time, constantly changing with experience. (WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW, 1992, p. 4.)

Brooks (1992a) states that the three factors which contribute to the formation of self-esteem are: inborn temperament, biological composition, and environmental forces. Once the child is born, only environmental forces can be altered.

From birth, interactions with other humans begin to shape the lives of children. Parents play an important role in the initial development of a child's self-esteem.

> I am responsible. I am ugly. I am a fast learner. I am a loser. These core beliefs that children hold about themselves come mostly from others....They can be harmful or helpful-but unless adults help youngsters change the harmful beliefs, they can be life sentences.... Childhood, more than any other age period, links self-esteem to environment. (Moorman, 1988 as cited in, AN I CAN ATTITUDE, 1988, p. 1).

Studies on the mind's effect on the body show that the mental outlook a child has regarding situations, either positive or negative, over a period of time, formulate thinking patterns directly affecting the child's self-esteem (Rand, 1993).

The family unit is the basic building block of society. In our society of increased mobility, family life is eroding. The extended family doesn't influence and support the basic family unit as it did in the past. Individual family units are relying more and more on community institutions for support.

Because of our ever-changing family structure, children are not receiving the benefits of close, stable relationships. Bonding time with parents is an integral part of a child's emotional health. Research

show that parents spend less than 5 minutes per day engaged in a meaningful conversation with their child (Soderberg, 1993).

Adults also play a crucial role in the development of the belonging or affiliation component of self-esteem. Many don't realize how much a child appreciates their time and attention, often believing that peer relationships are held more dear. Children lacking quality parental influence can become emotionally and physically distant. These children then turn to the peer group for support and validation. Permissive parents who do not set well-defined limits can lose children to loneliness and potentially dangerous peer group affiliation (Youngs, 1992).

Emotional neglect of children in our society increases daily. Parents who psychologically maltreat their children verbally or physically, jeopardize the development of healthy self-esteem. Concerted attacks by adults toward children take the forms of rejecting, isolating, ignoring, intimidating, minimizing, terrorizing, sexually abusing, and corrupting. Before children come to kindergarten, they could have spent the first 5 years of their lives in homes where screaming, demeaning comments, quarreling adults, comparision with others, and threats of abandonment routinely fill the atmosphere (Garbarino, 1992).

From sunrise to sunset, this is their world. Some witness the loss of a loved and trusted family member to drugs, gangs, or jail, having no control over what is happening. Others lose loved ones as they just up and leave without warning or explanation. These threats to a child's development are definitions of what some children realize as their esteem. This concept of "self" is what they will offer the world and what they will bring to their teachers and classmates.

Children who are physically or emotionally mistreated or abandoned by someone they depend on or love, will underestimate themselves or overexaggerate their self-worth to make up for their low opinion of themselves. Children who view themselves as "problems", will behave in like fashion. This self-appraisal will affect their learning (Youngs, 1992).

Negative comments are good motivators for the development of low self-esteem. Moorman (1983) indicates that children are criticized negatively by teachers 3 times for every one time that they are praised. Parents' negative comments are given fourteen times more often than one positive one. Children will keep either a positive or negative bent when thinking of themselves, due to their early communications with meaningful models.

When the emotional and physical well-being of the child isn't attended to, character-building principles will be lacking. Having a sibling with special needs, adjusting to divorce, and living with alcoholic role models are others causes of low self-esteem. Children living in these situations need added support to validate their worth and provide appropriate modeling (Goldberg, 1992).

Parents who are achievers, achieve. In doing so, they usually are monetarily rewarded and taken away from the home for most of the day. Often, these parents want their children to have things that they never had as a child. When children readily receive materialistic conveniences, they may be learning some lessons which work against development of a high self-esteem.

Overachieving parents may be creating underachieving offspring who may learn that good things will be there whether or not they work for them. In a sense, the parents have created an unreal world void of the values and skills necessary to maintain a high self-esteem. In the classroom, these children may tend toward the needs for external structure and motivation, constant stimulation and acceptance by others. They may display an inappropriate sense of power, thinking

that they will get whatever they choose to, here, as they do at home (Baldwin, 1992).

Unfortunately, the development of low self-esteem can also be evidenced in the child's school. A variety of causes can be attributed to the problem.

Children verbally or physically acting out or controlling situations concerning themselves and others in inappropriate ways are successful when the role model doesn't effectively diffuse the child's power. When adults do not or are not able to control unruly disturbances, the remainder of the class is left in fear.

When children perceive the learning place as a hostile environment, they tend to dislike school. Fear squelches the student's ability to concentrate on schoolwork. Some fearful students become angry and frequently criticize others. Not feeling safe, they impose their own discomfort on others to ease their own pain. Other students who hold their fears in create stress for themselves. Strategies for dealing with fear and anger need to be addressed in the classroom (Youngs, 1992).

Schools reinforce practices which convey to children that their worth is contingent upon ability. Mental or physical ability, or an attractive appearance assures a child significant attention in our society

and in our schools. Those who have none, receive a message that they are of lesser value. Feeling unvalued erodes self-esteem which makes it more difficult to recover from adversity.

A common belief among educators is that achievement and mastery pave the way toward a high self-esteem. Belonging, as an individual's right, is misunderstood and nuturing this sense in children is rarely a priority. An established feeling of belonging, however, is essential before self-esteem can be realized (Kunc, 1993).

Schools may convey the message that success is being "above average." Too often, ability wins out over effort as the desirable effect. If all children work hard, will all children get "A's?" Usually not. The chidren with the greater ability get the better grades. If all compete for the best grade, is not the competition inequitable? With these rules, the losers will always be the children with lesser God-given ability. While competition, in itself, is not debilitating, competition of this sort is debilitating to one's self-esteem. Competition often encourages a high level of interest and effort when students are free to choose and when they recognize a reasonable chance for success.

A result of this type of enforced academic competition, less able students who believe they will not measure up, may stop trying. Motivated to protect their self-esteem further, they'd rather flee from a sense of failure rather than failure itself. Failure avoidance in the classroom can often be observed as indifference or apathy, disguising inner feelings of fear and anxiety (Raffini, 1986).

To keep the low self-esteem cycle going in school, decisions are made for children such as retention and tracking. Too often, a student is known by a label. In ability grouping, focus for "remedial" classes often discourages self-direction which is an essential component for a high self-esteem (Brandt, 1990).

Ranking students in some schools begins at an early age. This is done in a variety of ways. When children are labeled "below-average," by adults whom they admire, the description is real and becomes a major part of their identity. In a structured learning situation, this belief manifests itself in numerous tendencies (Raffini, 1986).

Children are not quite sure of their abilitites. Children usually accept a teacher's evaluation and try to live up to it, even when the message is one of inferiority (Ginott, 1975). Giving children messages which say that they don't measure up, or subjecting

them to ridicule, are also low self-esteem boosters. One result of being subjected to this type of teacher behavior is a child who feels unable. When students have low self-esteem regarding situations in which adults they think highly of deem important, competence will be low (Krupp, 1991).

A low self-esteem can develop in a negative setting. Negativity is born in cold, unstructured, disrespectful sites. Children who spend their impressionable years there often lack strategies to behave suitably. They are rarely listened to or acknowledged and feel they never quite belong (Krupp, 1991).

A teacher's desire for perfection in her students is another cause for low self-esteem. Some children are valued, others are not. Usually, only perfect papers are displayed. Self-esteem in this type of classroom is fleeting; here when the product is perfect and gone when the child comes up short (Krupp, 1991).

Children possessing low self-esteem attribute their successes to chance or luck, which is not in their control. This thinking decreases their beliefs in their own abilities, which leads to a lack of motivation for future learning followed by feelings of detachment in an educational setting (Brooks, 1991a).

There is an abundance of educators who are "enablers." Enablers are teachers who allow students to be irresponsible or remiss without enforcing appropriate consequences for these behaviors. Teachers who are enablers are rescuers, negatively reinforcing habits of unaccountability. Students' who enjoy such a relationship will have their self-esteem undermined by it.

Examples of enabling in the classroom are: allowing children to "tune-out," accepting forgotten assignments without penalty, accepting messy work, ignoring cheating, giving easy tests, and passing all students.

Examples of behavioral enabling are: allowing students to speak to each other while being instructed, making excuses for students, accepting excuses and inappropriate behavior from some children and not others, putting words into students' mouths, allowing students who are shy not to participate, allowing children to call parents to bring things the student forgot, ignoring unacceptable or discourteous conduct to avoid meeting with parents, and cleaning up after students.

Teachers who rescue children are robbing them of their opportunity to act in a responsible manner. Lowering expectations for children informs them of the

teacher's belief in their inability. Enabling discourages growth and development of self-esteem (Landfried, 1989).

As part of the learning environment, a teacher's own temperament and expectations influence perceptions of and reactions to each child's uniqueness. That is a given. The difficulty arises when teachers are unwilling to modify their responses and goals to meet the specific needs of a child or when they hold differing expectations for children of different ethnic or socioeconomic backgrounds. A teacher who shows acceptance, flexibility, and sensitivity to the needs of all students, enhances the self-esteem of all students.

> To date, literature reviews of comparisions of American blacks' self-esteem to American whites' self-esteem show either no significant differences between the races in reported self-esteem or reports of higher self-esteem among African-Americans (Drury 1980; Tashakkori and Thompsonn 1991; Wright 1985). Drury (1980) reviewed empirical research that found that African-Americans in desegregated environments tend to exhibit lower self-esteem than those in segregated environments...Integrated educational settings are susceptible to a variety of conditions that could serve as hindrances to a rewarding school experience for African-American students (Crain et. al. 1982). These conditions are the result of

> a complex interaction of student-body racial proportions; students' socioeconomic status levels; a school's past experience with desegregation; staff attitudes, expectations, and behaviors; the nature of school activities and decisions-making procedures; the extent of community civil-rights activities; and the extent of student interracial contact (Frisby, 1993:148-149).

Many influences outside the school setting, some willful, denigrate a child's worth. Underprivileged children are affected most. Adult models who do not recognize an obligation to enhance a child's self-esteem, fail to build a strong, confident, empathetic society.

Very often, we allow children to fend for themselves to search inwardly to find goodness. Knowing that environment plays the most significant role in the development of one's self-esteem, it's not fair to do this given the conditions of a deplorably inequitable society that most face today (Beane, 1991).

"Mr." Fred Rogers explains that since his show began in the 1960s, the emotional development of children hasn't changed, but our society has. Children of the 1990s are exposed to many adult-type problems which they have to deal with, sometimes thinking they are the cause. Influential adults need to convey the appropriate messages to these youngsters at these times (Santoli, 1993).

Presently, our society puts heavy emphasis on put-downs and trash talking. Children learn this mode of disrespect from role models at an early age. What is an important method of communication for adults will be just as important to the youngsters who learn from them (Clock).

In summary, a child's self-esteem is learned, changeable, evolves over time within a given environment and is directly effected by those he holds dear. Family, school and society provide unending opportunities for development of a high or a low self-esteem. Our society today presents its youth with a difficult challenge - knowing and accepting who and what you are.

Chapter 3

THE SOLUTION STRATEGY

Review of the Literature

Analysis of probable cause data suggested that low self-esteem is precipitated by past influences of both home and school. For the purpose of this project it should be stated, that though suggestions are made for parental involvement, solution strategies to be implemented at the school site by the teacher will be the primary focus.

> The California Task Force to Promote Self-Esteem and Personal and Social Responsibility defines self-esteem as "appreciating my own worth and importance, and having the character to be accountable for myself, and to act responsibly toward others." (Krupp, 1992 p.163).

Building self-esteem takes a lifetime. Since self-esteem is learned, it begins to develop as soon as the child is born. Self-esteem is internalized when the environment validates what people perceive as their self-worth.

Infants can experience feelings of well-being from the time of birth. If the parent-child relationship is empathetically responsive to the infant's individual temperament, needs, and wishes, a healthy self-esteem begins. Later, children must be listened to to feel valued, and must be accepted for their own identities. When children feel that they are listened to, taken seriously and genuinely cared for, their self-esteem is high.

At times in their development, and ultimately as adults, children need to be able to navigate independently through troubled waters of an ever-challenging society. In order to do this, they need to be able to think and make sound judgment. Parental influence early in a child's life, setting limits and using the word "no," can help the child create a sense of inner control, responsibility, and competence. "No" acts as an anchor, resisting the child as he becomes an autonomous thinker. Children with strong inner controls face external pressures more successfully as adults (Hayden, 1992).

Parents play an important role in the development of a child's inner strength. Inner strength is developed by conviction of values and behavior congruent with those values. When behavior matches

values, then integrity forms, leading to increased self-esteem (WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW, 1992 p. 2).

All children feel highs and lows in one or more component of self-esteem during their impressionable years. It is important to convey to the child that these are valid feelings that all people have; a part of human nature.

Researchers have investigated why, when children are exposed to mentally unhealthful familial and pychosocial experiences, some leading to criminality, a portion of them escape psychic damage while others do not. What they found was that a child's self-esteem and resilience enabled survival. Characteristics of resilient, mentally healthy children are: social competence, cognitive problem solving skills, coping with emotional stress, and having a source of social support (Peters & Orley, 1992).

> The California Task Force to Promote Self-Esteem and Personal and Social Responsibility (1990:5) concludes that: Regardless of age, race, creed, sex or sexual orientation, an affirming environment in the home, school, workplace, and community is crucial for nurturing self-esteem. (Krupp, 1991:76).

Schools are social agencies which contribute to the health and well-being of children. Environment being the most powerful influence on fostering a high

self-esteem, a school has the potential to enhance or debilitate a child's self-esteem in every place the eye can see and in every sound the ear can hear. While educators realize and accept they can't meet every need of every child, some contend that they have a moral obligation to focus on this part of the child's identity (Beane, 1991).

A teacher's impact on the child's self-esteem is lasting and memorable. The way that a teacher relates makes more of a difference in the life of a child than what he says; a student does not need to be told in what regard he is held. Studies show that teachers who nurture have students who are more helpful to others than teachers who are detached (Segal, 1992).

The children need to trust and feel affection from the adults from whom they learn. They rarely care about how much the teacher knows unless they know how much the teacher cares. The teacher's concern validates the child's worth. Teachers who have been accepted by the children, who are loved and trusted, have a tremendous amount of power over the them and the development of their self-esteem (Youngs, 1992).

Spending time with children, perhaps at lunch, and sharing interests allows them to get to know the teacher as a person. Using a journal to write back and forth from student to teacher provides an opportunity

to increase familiarity. Personal interactions with children convey a message of warmth, caring, and respect. Talking about why one is happy to be their teacher and why they are special shows that they are valued (Moorman, 1991).

Teachers need to believe in all children and hold high expectations for them. Expectations affect motivation and self-esteem, as well as learning. If the teacher expects a mannerly, capable student, the student will strive to be mannerly and capable (Youngs, 1992).

All children benefit from expectations, as they validate the child's worth.

> Sowell (1986) describes a number of variables that are primarily responsible for attitudes of self-confidence among successful graduates of historically high-performing predominantly black schools. These variables include teacher communication of the worth of the individual, evidence of intense personal interest from teachers to promising students, high and uncompromising teacher expectations, and teacher willingness to go "beyond the call of duty" in helping students to succeed academically. (Frisby, Tucker, 1993 p.154).

Caring educators can facilitate creation of a learning environment that will allow for and encourage the child to become increasingly self-aware by promoting the use of specific child-centered

strategies. Classroom environments where positive self-esteem is enhanced encourage personal creativity and uniqueness, allowing the child to develop a distinct identity and a strong sense of purpose (Hunter, 1993).

Canfield (1990) discusses a 10-step plan teachers can use in their classrooms to help children raise their levels of self-esteem. These include: taking responsibility for your actions without blaming another; using self-talk and realizing that what you say to yourself, not what others say about you will affect your self-esteem; focusing on the positive; using support groups to make each child a focal point for at least a short time each day; identifying your strengths and weaknesses; having a clear vision of goals and detailed objectives with guidelines and timelines; using visualization; looking at outcomes as if they were already achieved, which makes for greater success; taking action; and responding to feedback, using mistakes to grow.

The foundation for building self-esteem is security. Children will share more about themselves personally the more secure they feel. The ways to bring about a secure atmosphere include calling children by name, making eye contact and listening and touching. These will facilitate creation of a warm

feeling. Offering respectful treatment will make children feel that they are appreciated. Clear limit setting and consistency of consequences assures the child of ways to gain and not to gain approval. Exhibiting honesty, keeping confidences, and always being there when the children arrive contribute to the children's senses of security. Security provides for open communication and creates a sense of belonging which are essential building blocks for future success. When children feel secure, they are open to exploration. They are enabled to accept, without fear, their understanding of self strengths and weaknessess and to empathetically tolerate the same in others (Brooks, 1991a).

For a child to feel unique, he must acknowledge his special qualities and know that they are valued by others. Fostering a sense of uniqueness in children can be done using the following techniques: implement self-awareness activities; use personal journals; read books "about me"; separate the child from the action; allow for individual differences; encourage the child to break down difficult tasks and focus on the thought that "step by step" he'll achieve; and have structured time when students write good things about each classmate, compile them and present it to the child (Moorman, 1991).

Children who feel good about themselves will want to explore their world further and risk learning new things. Thus, firmly established environments must be one of nurturing and honoring children. Emotional as well as academic needs must be met.

Children must be taught that they have the power to make things happen. Parents and educators should acknowledge and encourage this belief in self and provide countless opportunities for children to utilize their power. Afterward, praising their accomplishment or effort is essential to helping them develop a risk-taking orientation (Butts, 1993).

Risk taking is comfortable in an environment where children belong. Their diversity is accepted and welcomed. An authentic sense of belonging validates children and celebrates their diversity. Children leave this environment with a more tolerant, less judgmental view of people whose attitudes and opinions differ from their own. (Kunc, 1993).

According to Kunc (1993) creating belonging includes common vision, consensus, collaboration, choice, conflict resolution, and celebration. Strategies teachers can use to increase a child's sense of belonging include: using cooperative learning, giving students a tutoring task for a younger child, using verbage such as "us, we, our"; assigning group

projects; doing a class service project for the community; preparing group goals; having class meetings to discuss plans; touching him with hands, eyes, and proximity; smiling; using the child's name in the middle of a sentence; writing in journals; using the phrase "I noticed"; and having the student seek another for an answer before approaching the teacher. A sense of alliance is essential soil for trust and cooperation to flourish in order to bear the greatest fruit of self-esteem.

Another essential is ownership. Feeling a sense of ownership and responsibility for their experiences, and having opportunities to manage their environment results in a greater sense of self-esteem. Displaying work, providing opportunities for the children to decide physical details, and setting up the classroom for specific purposes gives a child a psychological space, one which he "owns" (Brooks, 1991a).

In addition, student choices and responsibility for consequences of the choices are key objectives for increasing self-esteem. Important, too, is the recognition of possible infringement the choice may have on others. Consideration for others in light of the choice makes for healthy, thoughtful relationships. Success in this area when young, builds confidence; the confidence some may need to take risks when

light of today's societal influences, children need to learn strategies to help them to turn negative thoughts to positive ones. Parents and teachers should assume this responsibility for children in early stages of development.

In helping a child cope with negative thoughts, there are two questions which can be asked to get him through what looks to him like a crisis. What is the worst thing that could happen? What could you do to handle it? This process will elicit responses in which managable solutions may stem as well as allow the child's perception of his initial problem to shift toward the positive. The significant outcome to be reached is to eventually ween the child from adult directed probing to self-talk in which the child focuses on positive direction.

"There are 3 mental components to every potential problem: situation, self-statement, emotional reaction" (p. 2). When a perceived negative situation arises, children who've been guided with positive thinking strategies using appropriate self-talk, should react positively, thus enhancing their self-esteem (Rand & Saunders, 1993).

Teaching children to think positively about themselves requires children taking time to reflect. In a self-esteem lesson, the teacher's focus is on

facilitating a process of thinking. The child's focus is on using the lesson to ponder aspects of self (Krupp, 1992).

Thinking positively about yourself includes: acceptance of strengths and weaknesses, self-encouragement, taking pride in achievement, setting realistic goals, learning to enjoy your own company, trusting your instincts, respecting yourself, and loving your uniqueness (Krupp, 1992).

A positive outlook provides choices on how to improve the situation. Positive thinkers look happier and others tend to gravitate to them. They are not afraid to deal with their emotions (Rand, Saunders, 1993).

Positive feelings enable the child to take risk after risk. These continuous feelings encourage self-motivation. Learning tasks become easier and occasional setbacks are naturally overcome. In time, a positive inner core develops. The child has an inner feeling that says, "I am an able person. I am a good person."

Thinking you can do something makes the task easier and doable. Thinking "I'll try," gives a child a better chance of succeeding than thinking "I won't." Thinking "I can," however, creates the greatest probability that one will succeed. Changing negative

images in the child's head, is something the child must do for himself, using self-talk (Krupp, 1991).

Success builds self-esteem. Bringing an "I can" attitude to all a child undertakes will enhance his ability to succeed. Teachers can best assist a child in developing this outlook by speaking to the child assuming he already knows how to do the given task. If the child knows you think he can, he'll try, unreluctantly. Taking risks is essential for growth. Learners find solutions. Negative thinkers and those who play is safe miss out on feeling a heightened self-esteem (Oglenski, 1988).

Positive attitudes are contagious. We can not give a child a positive attitude. We need to remember and teach the child that they choose their attitudes. They have the power to be and to change. As educators, displaying a positive message is helping the child to focus on an uplifting way to go about his life (Hancock, 1988).

When emphasizing self-acceptance, we must teach children that self-judgment is not the message. Awareness of feelings toward our thoughts and actions is the focal point to accepting imperfections of self. When we are aware, we can act to make things better. Blame is self-defeating to a positive self-concept (Branden, 1993).

Positive teachers work against a "praise deficit" atmosphere. Teachers rarely fail to praise when success is noted. Failing to give positive feedback when children do the expected is what is known as praise deficit. Self-esteem boosters realize and encourage a child's effort and outcome even when it's consistently routine and acceptable. An air of praise permeates continually (Brooks, 1991a).

Acknowledging things a child does with positive comments may encourage the child to think better of himself. When children receive a compliment, however, it may not always make a difference in how they feel about themselves. Others factors such as respect for the person giving the praise, importance as to what others think, how deserving they feel and the significance of the issue all have an effect on their responses. In effect, they decide if the feeling is real (Branden, 1993).

Praise is important. There are two types of praise. One, evaluative praise, should be avoided. The other, appreciative praise, should be encouraged. Evaluative praise is judgmental; it welcomes dependency. Appreciative, descriptive praise relies on inner evaluation and motivation; it boosts self-esteem. When being praised, the children draw a conclusion about themselves. When praise is real and

appreciative, children conclude they are positive and productive. Praise without judgment makes erring safe (Ginott, 1975).

Praise must be personal, immediate, deserved, behavior-centered, specific, consistently used, and can be given verbally, physically or tangibly; never given in a backhanded fashion (Youngs, 1992).

Our inner motivation for all we do is to enhance our self-esteem. We try to be the best we can be. Students self-esteem is closely tied to their ability to achieve. Student who achieve, feel valued (Raffini, 1986). A learning environment which builds high self-esteem is one where all achievement, even what's expected, is acknowledged. To maximize effort from all children, we need to focus on outcome-based instruction.

> Bloom (1976) argues that 90 to 95 percent of our student population have enough academic ability to master all of the content and objectives of our curriculums, assuming maximum effort, enough time on task, and optimum learning environments. It is much more humane and productive to evaluate an individual against identifiable standards of excellence than against another's performance. By doing so, we make it possible for all to succeed. (Raffini, 1986 p. 55).

Celebrating authenticity, or capturing a teachable moment, is a method of unlocking a healthy self-esteem.

An example of a authentic moment would be when the student adds to a discussion an activity in his own way, bringing to it what wasn't planned, his unique approach. Teachers celebrate this when they take class time, questions further, facilitates the discussion, and make the students' thoughts the focus.

It's important for us to remind children that they become what they envision becoming. Encouraging creative imaginations opens up new avenues for children on which to reach their maximum potentials (Butts, 1993).

In summary, development of self-esteem involves a personal, ongoing relationship with the environment. To provide a classroom climate conducive to the enhancement of a child's self-esteem, a few suggestions are made. First, teachers must feel good about themselves. Children learn more from a teacher who has a positive self-concept. Parents and teachers with high self-esteem usually have more positive children to care for (Krupp, 1991). Next, self-esteem blooms when warmth, limits and respect blend to create a secure learning place. The learning place should be accepting of all and should appreciate each child's uniqueness. Also, positive attitudes are a must. Students are more motivated to learn in an environment which spotlights strengths, not deficits. Negative thinking is

abandoned and strengths are the focus in a surrounding furnished with high standards. Lastly, praise is essential. It must be genuine and deserved, focusing on effort rather than achievement.

Project Outcomes

The terminal objective of this problem intervention was to provide a means by which the students could enhance their self-esteem. Therefore, it is stated that:

> As a result of implementing strategies which address student self-esteem, during the period, October 1, 1993 through February 28, 1994, the fourth grade class at Andrews Elementary School will improve their self-esteem as evidenced by student self-esteem fitness profiles and teacher journal entries.

Though we can't change the inner concept of children, probable causes gathered from the literature convey that we can provide them with a place where they can lift their own levels of self-esteem. Environments which enhance self-esteem are filled with a humanistic, democratic air, student planning, heterogeneous grouping and high expectations. The curriculum includes cooperative learning, planning input from students, personal and social skill development, self-reflection, multicultural content, service projects, and innovative activities (Krupp, 1991).

Self-esteem enhancement involves a role model's time, love, and empathy. Deliberation must be given to decisions. Fair, uncompromising expectations must be established. Cultivating a project such as this, the facilitator must have realistic expectations about outcomes given the time frame. Hopefully, the seeds of self-esteem enhancement sown in this classroom will begin to germinate in the lives of the children, and be continually nurtured by their significant others for a lifetime of fruitful self-actualization.

In order to accomplish the terminal objective, the following process objectives defined the major strategic procedures proposed for problem resolution.

1) As a result of implementing specific methods, activities, and expectations, the teacher will create a learning environment conducive to the enhancement of self-esteem, during the period, October 1, 1993 through February 28, 1994, in order that the students will experience a genuine sense of belonging and worth as well as a realization of the power they possess for decision making and self-reflection.

2) As a result of preparing ongoing instruction addressing various components of self-esteem, the teacher will implement a 30

minute lesson per day during the period, October 1, 1993 through February 28, 1994, engaging the students in the development of an appreciation for their own uniqueness and that of their classmates and teacher.

Proposal Solution Components

In summary, the solution components consist of developing and implementing strategies to create a learning environment conducive to the enhancement of self-esteem and the developing and implementation of lessons on the components of self-esteem.

Chapter 4

ACTION PLAN FOR IMPLEMENTING THE SOLUTION STRATEGY

Description of Problem Resolution Activities

The action plan is designed to address two major solution components: providing a learning environment conducive to improving student self-esteem and engaging students in self-esteem awareness and enhancement activities.

Prior to the opening of school, guidelines for implementation of the self-esteem project are pondered and delineated. The plan of action will be carried out daily for the duration of the study. For the most part, both components will begin and end at the same times, spanning five months of the school year. There will be some physical evidence of a child-centered approach as the children enter the classroom on the first day of school due to the philosophy of the teacher.

The implementation plan is presented below.

To create a conducive learning environment:

- the teacher will:

1. Accept all children as they are

   by - giving deserved praise
   - giving accurate appraisal
   - having a positive attitude
   - giving equal opportunity to all
   - allowing for individual differences
   - appreciating & drawing from uniqueness/multicultural diversity
   - encouraging self-expression
   - communicating honestly

2. Communicate, model, & reinforce expectations

   by - displaying a respectful attitude
   - communicating thoughtfully
   - treating all fairly
   - giving best effort
   - behaving responsibly
   - cleaning up after self
   - helping peers & teacher
   - sharing
   - valuing each person & his effort
   - using participatory democracy

3. Affirm the child and his effort

   by - verbal recognition (solo, before group, before principal, before parents)
   - tangible encouragement (stickers, erasers, certificates, edibles, opportunity for special experience, use child as an example)
   - written praise (notes on assignments, in personal journal, as a class activity, in am class book)
   - physical message (hug, wink, pat, hand-hold)

4. Plan the physical setting

by - arranging desks facing each other in groups for cooperative activities
- having a large carpeted area for group activity
- hanging posters, signs, etc. as visual reminders of goals and affirmations of self
- putting teacher's desk in an inconspicuous p.ace
- securing audio-visual equipment for use as needed, such as: computer, printer, overhead projector, record player, tape recorder
- providing tables and chairs for cooperative working or display areas
- establishing a clean, bright, orderly, child-focused room
- changing wall coverings and bulletin boards at least monthly throughout the year

5. Give ownership to children

by - giving them choices & engaging them in decision making for as many issues as possible
- allowing them to design & produce bulletin boards
- providing opportunities for decorating room
- encouraging them to bring things from home
- creating a silhouette profile of each child; hanging it prominently all year
- displaying their work
- trusting them with jobs; large & small
- allowing them to clean & organize the room
- changing seats once a month
- using referents: "us, we, our"
- having class meetings
- facilitating a class project done for others
- planning for monthly evening sharing times with families and friends

6. Provide for risk taking/security

by - modeling acceptance of failure
- giving non-threatening feedback
- teaching strategies for addressing tasks step-by-step
- using consistent methods of discipline
- encouraging genuine effort regardless of amount of achievement
- forming a personal relationship with each child
- referring to child by name
- making eye-contact when speaking
- greeting daily with "3-Hs" (hug, high-five, handshake); child's choice
- conveying clear, consistent limits
- exhibiting honesty
- keeping confidences
- being there when needed
- celebrating steps taken, little or big
- evaluating the seriousness of misbehavior and responding appropriately
- creating outlets for emotional expression
- not accepting put-downs or ridicule

7. Spotlight students' strengths

by - teaching goal setting & reflection
- commenting verbally
- writing notes
- using child as an example for class
- implementing lessons for sharing personal strengths
- emphasizing an "I can " attitude
- creating role plays on "self-talk"

8. Act as a facilitator

   by - encouraging & designing lessons emphasizing divergent thinking
   - going with moments of authenticity; being flexible as to lesson method and time frame when children interject ideas which divert the lesson, but having meaning to them
   - praising effort to carry out responsibilities
   - setting high standards
   - giving suggestions
   - encouraging children to accept differences

9. Stimulate intellectual curiosity

   by - using a variety of teaching methods
   - modeling behaviors desired from students: reading, investigating, brainstorming, observing, creating
   - create units on subjects of student interest

10. Use cooperative learning

   for - teaching lessons
   - creating projects
   - enabling group study
   - providing for game playing
   - solving conflicts
   - using decision making strategies
   - getting to know each other

11. Build own self-esteem

by - putting information gained from research into practice
- using positive "self-talk"; "I can"
- believing in ability
- encouraging administration to provide for an esteem-building environment for staff
- continuing to act as a child advocate
- continuing to set personal & professional goals
- continuing to be myself despite obstacles
- affirming self for values, beliefs, effort, uniqueness
- encouraging others

To teach about enhancing one's self-esteem:

- the teacher will:

1. Design a unit on self-esteem

by - selecting which integral components of self-esteem will be studied
- deciding in which order to implement the components
- deciding how much time to devote to the instruction of each component
- using published & teacher's own innovative activities
- preparing a self-evaluative measure for the student to complete at conclusion of each lesson
- providing a space for the collection of individual portfolios

2. Implement the unit on self-esteem

by - instructing the students on definitions concerning various components of self-esteem
- providing activities that enable the students to transfer their understandings to their own lives
- informing students on how to evaluate the lesson & reflect on their learning
- presenting instruction on the purpose for & use of portfolios

The teacher will act as facilitator of the afore mentioned principles and instruction. The climate of the learning environment will be created and evolve as a result of all who inhabit it as times goes on.

Specifically, as to the instruction, the students will engage in a formal lesson on self-esteem for a 30 minute period, once a day, from October 1, 1993 to February 28, 1994. Physical safety, emotional security, identity, belonging, competence, and purpose are the self-esteem components which will be the focus of the lessons. At the conclusion of the instruction, time will be given, for self-evaluation, (Appendix D) group reflection, and future goal discussion.

Methods of Assessment

The primary data collection method to assess the effects of the intervention will be the administration of the student self-esteem fitness profile given at the beginning of the study. The results of each group of profiles will be compared.

In addition, any remarkable comparisions which can be made of the students' anecdotal records during the five months will be noted as evidenced by teacher journal entries.

Chapter 5

EVALUATION OF RESULTS AND PROCESS

Implementation History

The terminal objective of the intervention, included means by which students could enhance their self-esteem. Student self-esteem fitness profiles indicated that, for some children, deficits in one or more of the components of self-esteem existed. Teacher observation provided additional data. Therefore, the terminal objective stated:

> As a result of implementing strategies which address student self-esteem, during the period, October 1, 1993 through February 28, 1994, the fourth grade class at Andrews Elementary School will improve their self-esteem as evidenced by student self-esteem fitness profiles and teacher journal entries.

Plans for the creation of a learning environment conducive to enhancing a student's self-esteem were established during the summer months. Already in place was a child-centered teaching philosophy that accepted children and their backgrounds, regardless of their psychological and sociological traits. Evidence of

this philosophy included empty bulletin board space for the children to "own", desks arranged in cooperative learning groups, posters that presented acceptance and encouragement of uniqueness, and the teacher's desk and primary workspace pushed to the periphery of the room, out of main focus.

Also in the summer, the principal approved the teacher's request to open the classroom one evening per month, giving the children an opportunity to invite anyone they wished to share some time with them in their school environment.

Prior to the opening of school, a letter was sent to the parents briefly stating that a self-esteem project would take place during the year and requesting their help.

In September, and as time went on, students realized the expectations, limits, and freedoms that would be an integral part of their lives until June. Students began to give a part of their personalities to the evolution of the "class family." Recognizing and sharing strengths, planning goals, and never saying "I can't" became the group's mission.

During the first few weeks of the school year, data was gathered through a student self-esteem fitness profile (Appendix A). The students were asked to fill out an "agree" or "disagree" survey. They were

permitted to find a spot of their choosing within the classroom to sit comfortably and used clipboards to give their choices as the teacher read each item aloud. When complete, the students returned their surveys to a large cardboard box while the teacher looked away. The teacher purposely did not want to see whose paper went in first, second, etc., as the students were promised anonymity. This procedure took place once a day for six days, covering all six components of self-esteem. All but one survey consisted of ten items; the other had seven.

During the third week of school, the annual Open House took place. At this meeting, the teacher spoke with parents about the year's curricular goals and classroom procedures. The presentation was lengthened in order to explain the self-esteem project and request the parents' assistance. This change was approved by the principal and pre-arranged with the parents. It was at this meeting that each household received a parent questionnaire (Appendix C) that was similar but not as lengthy as the one given the students. Parent interest and support was high. Twenty of the twenty-five families returned the questionnaire. Each student returned the sealed parent survey (Appendix E) to the cardboard box.

In addition to principal and parent approval, the director of research for the district requested a meeting with the teacher in order to gain a clear understanding of the project. With support from all concerned, the five month project began. Creation of a learning environment conducive to the enhancement of self-esteem, and daily instruction addressing various components of self-esteem, were the process objectives for the project.

As previously stated, the classroom environment evolved over time and was formed by teacher expectations. The methods adopted by the group for day to day "living," were the result of daily instruction. During the duration of the project, the environment was one in which all children were: accepted, respected, affirmed, encouraged, given ownership, disciplined consistently, offered equal opportunity, communicated with personally, expected to display an "I can" attitude, reminded to use "self-talk," given leadership roles, taught using various methods that addressed multiple intelligences, provided cooperative learning strategies, and exposed to the uniqueness of their classmates.

Beginning on October 1, 1993, and ending February on 28, 1994, a total of 72 thirty minute periods were devoted to specific instruction about self-esteem. Every day, with a few exceptions due to assemblies, etc., at 2:30 P.M. the schoolday ended with "S.E." as it was written on the chalkboard. When it was absent from the schedule, students would ask, "Are we having 'Self-Esteem' today?

When planning the lessons, the teacher found that "deciding how much time to devote to the instruction of each component" was very difficult. Due to the nature of the subject, most of the instruction comprised many components. At times, lessons were prepared using major themes such as stress or sharing. Numerous lessons were selected from the literature and some were adapted or created by the teacher.

Often the teacher would select a specific lesson on the day it would be taught, taking into account the class climate and student needs. Many teaching mehtods were implemented; it was rare that two similar methods were used on consecutive days. For example, one day the class was assigned a written reflective activity, with students remaining at their desks and working alone. The next day, they may have been engaged in a "sharing circle" on the rug. The following day, they may have created an artifact. A detailed account of

each lesson accompanied by notes of observation and reflection are logged in the teacher journal (see attachment). The following text contains brief descriptions of some of the activities and lessons.

Since the beginning of the year, the students were instructed to write down, on individual slips of paper, what they felt they couldn't do. These were collected in the "I Can't" mailbox. At the beginning of this project, the class went outside to the field and met one student's mother and father who brought their bar-be-que. Each child grabbed some of the "I can'ts" and one by one proceeded to burn them. The next day, the "I Can't" mailbox was replaced with a brand new one labeled, "I Can!" Throughout the study, notes were deposited there. The "roasting" of "I can'ts" proved to be a great success. Occaisonally, students would say to one another, "We don't say 'can't' in our room!" The child spoken to would then correct himself.

"Giving support" and "living dependently" were illustrated by the class pairing off and sitting back-to-back on the rug, locking arms, and standing. Students needed each other to reach their goal.

"The Big Muddy" was an activity done sitting in a circle on the rug. It started when the teacher whispered a message in a student's ear. The message was repeated by each person going around the circle. A

meaningful discussion followed on the meaning of rumors, gossip, and betrayal of a friend who asked that a secret be kept.

The students were extremely interested in the concept and definition of stress. When the formula for stress was explained, they exhibited signs of deep thought; all eyes were on the teacher, not a sound was heard, and facial expressions changed as information was conveyed. They listened intently, were eager to respond, share, and question. Future decisions, personal choice, and personal power were emphasized.

Writing angry feelings down in a letter to a person with whom the student was angry was a technique shared by the teacher. Whether the letter was sent or not, didn't matter. What this activity did was to get the anger out of the person holding it. Cooperative groups were formed to list things that caused stress and to design ways to alleviate or prevent stress. A large poster illustrating the latter was created and displayed in the room. The students also participated in a physical activity showing how exercise relieved stress.

One student shared the stress she felt over having her best friend move across country. The class helped her brainstorm some "stressbusters." A few days later, it was learned that she put her feelings into lyrics

and submitted them to the music teacher. The teacher was so impressed, that the verse she wrote was incorporated into a song the school chorus performed for their holiday concerts.

A kinesiology demonstartion proved enjoyable, giving awesome results (Appendix F).

In another memorable, fun activity, the students were randomly paired. They told of something they thought they deserved an award for. Using various materials, they created an award for their partner. The class was taken to the auditorium with their awards. Each student came up on stage and announced the name of the person receiving the award and what it was for. The recipient gave a brief acceptance speech and selected one of the class' 32 class cheers that was then bestowed upon him/her.

Bestowing praise on a classmate was another special occurrance. "Praise" was a time when students could express the "good" that they saw in another. Beginning in January, after the classmates were more familiar, a student was randomly selected to be "praised." The student would select a favorite color that was used to make his/her 2'x3' poster. Individual students would volunteer a verbal compliment. For example, "I praise you for your sense of humor," or "I praise you because you manage your anger well." The

"praising" student wrote the sentiment on the poster. The poster was hung on the classroom door until the next "praise" time, then the student took it home.

Most impressive was the time, effort, and interest given to the design and production of a class flag. One month of lessons was devoted to brainstorming, planning, sharing, compromising, voting, and creating the flag. The children presented any number of drawn symbols and explanations for why they would represent our class family. Each member listened, pondered, selected, and voted on his/her choices. Discussions were held. More votes were taken. Numerous excellent suggestions were whittled down to five final choices that were adopted for use.

More planning occurred in small groups and they used the symbols to design a picture of a flag. Presentations were made. Votes were tallied. More negotiations took place. Finally, a majority decided on the design for what is now known as the first "Rugen Class Flag." Plans were finalized on how to secure and pay for the materials and seamstress. One parent volunteered to sew and donate some materials. Everyone brought in twenty-five cents for new materials. The parent brought in her sewing machine, ironing board, and extra paraphernalia to make the flag in the classroom for all to see and participate. The teacher

wanted for a smaller version for each child to have, but the size and the number of pieces of material was prohibitive. Pictures were taken and each child will receive copies of them at the end of the school year.

During the flag project, a student suggested that we compose a class pledge to accompany it. This process took only a week as the class was very sure about the wording and the message. Five groups presented their pledges aloud. A vote was taken after just one reading, with no one wishing to alter a word. They were confident that they had heard something that they wanted to adopt, and they did (Appendix G).

At the conclusion of each period, the children were given a teacher-made evaluation sheet (Appendix D) to respond to and place in their portfolio along with any written work done for that day. Usually that evening the teacher would record the lesson, observations, and reflections on the day in a journal.

In addition to daily lessons, special happenings were implemented. "B.I.O." (By Invitation Only) nights were scheduled monthly, lunches with the teacher (Lunch Bunch) occurred weekly, and class parties were earned periodically.

"B.I.O" nights gave opportunities for students to invite people to come to their classroom. Immediate family members, neighbors, friends from other schools, and friends from other classrooms were among the guests. The teacher sat in the hall reading or grading papers. The purpose of this activity was to provide time on a consistent basis for the students to share their school environment with those close to them. The sharing included touring the room, viewing work displayed on the walls, reading and writing in journals, playing African games, using the computer, creating bulletin board decorations, explaining the latest unit of study, talking to Garfield (the class mascot), and meeting other families (Appendix H).

"Lunch Bunch" occured once a week. The teacher ate lunch with a student, who was randomly selected, and two others, who were chosen by the selected student. The purpose was to provide an informal setting to converse with the students in a personal way.

When a few of the students who had behavior problems reached their goals of working within our class family structure for a certain length time, without eliciting a negative response or gaining attention for inappropriate behavior, a party was planned during the lunch hour. At these parties, the

class celebrated its' support of these students and the students were honored for their progress. Parents, teachers, siblings, and the principal were invited by the honoree. The classmates provided edible treats and kind remarks. The teacher provided helium balloons, horns, hats, the camera, and special gifts for the classmates who the honoree chose as having supported him/her the most since the last party. Most impressive were the parents, who, in the past, found it most difficult to come to school functions. These parents would show up at 12:15, in the middle of their workday, for these celebrations. One student brought in special pencils his mother bought to be given to youngsters upon reaching their goals.

This activity gave the students, their families, and the teacher what can only be described as magical moments. Often, during the exchange between classmates during this event, parents and teacher were moved to tears. As a family with ups and downs, strengths and weaknesses, goals and inefficiencies, this class of students and their families grew to form a bond that made a lifetime impression on those involved (Appendix I).

Presentation, Analysis and Reflection of Project Results

Assessment of the planned intervention is based on an elaborate collection of daily journal entries logged by the teacher and the results of pre and post student self-esteem fitness surveys (Appendices J & K). Of the two sets of evidence, the journal provides a more thorough and detailed account of data and it's importance is highlighted.

The analysis and reflection of the projects results are presented in the following manner: first, the six self-esteem components showing the number of students who have possible deficiencies are listed; second, a section is written for each component containing a brief synopsis of the notable changes followed by teacher observation and reflection taken from the journal entires.

Self-esteem deficiency was based on three or more negative reponses in each of the six components: physical safety, emotional security, identity, belonging, competence, and purpose. Twenty-five students took pre and post-surveys.

The number of students who showed possible deficiencies are:

Component	Pre-survey	Post-survey
physical safety	9	11
emotional security	14	11
identity	5	6
belonging	6	4
competence	3	3
purpose	6	6

The number of students showing post-survey deficiencies in the physical safety component of self-esteem increased by two since the intitial survey was given in September. In comparing both surveys the notable changes were: lack of feeling safe in the neighborhood, an increased need to see the health clerk during school hours, and feeling that parents do not discipline fairly. On the positive side, all students felt safe in their classes.

Upon reflection, the lack of feeling safe in the neighborhood is understandable due to the increase in crime, most especially shootings, and apparent drug trafficking and gang activity.

At school, students have asked repeatedly to go to the health clerk for what turns out to be minor aches or injuries. This behavior can be construed as an

avoidance mechanism, as these students are the same ones who have trouble disciplining themselves when a work assignment is due. They also have a recent school history, in their former classroom of lack of structure and expectation. Striving for fourth grade behavior has been an ongoing goal for these children. With much teacher direction and parent support, they have come a long way.

The unanimous feeling of safety expressed by the class has much significance for the teacher for various reasons. Research suggests that a feeling of security is needed for self-esteem to grow and for meaningful education to take place. In September, not all of these students perceived their past classrooms as safe havens. Both parents and students commented that some students who were assigned to this class were those to fear (Appendix L).

Through behavior modification techniques, close and constant communication with the parents and principal, and class expectations for support and understanding, two of these students have made tremendous growth (Appendix M). The class now seems to view these students as having many facets to their personalities: they are no longer labeled as "bad kids." Understanding and acceptance of different natures within the whole group is the key to

self credit when doing something well and realizing that everything does not have to be done well.

It is clear that these students gave frequent praise, verbally, in writing, spontaneously and deliberately to each other throughout the study. Evidence of this is conclusive, both from responses on the identity component survey and from teacher observations. Periodically, one student would write about the progress of another in his/her personal journal. Parents have shared that discussions take place at home about other students and their goals. During whole group or small group instruction, these students were perceived as having difficulty answering correctly. Spontaneous encouragement was given out verbally in a very personal way; "Good job, Betsy!" Many times a class cheer was given; all done spontaneously, during instruction, with no teacher prompting. This was very rewarding for the teacher. Perhaps, this behavior, along with "self-talk" lessons, and reminders, produced the increase in numbers who self-praised.

An impressive area of growth noted by the teacher dealt with perfectionism. In September, over half the students felt that everything one does must be done well. That response dropped by half in February. Perfectionism can become a vicious circle for students

as bad feelings about self are created when papers or answers aren't perfect; sometimes students are turned off to a second try; sometimes students use their failure as an attention getting device.

Often the teacher accentuated mistakes purposely. Students would be encouraged to try again and a positive attitude would be modeled. Hopefully, these students learned that their best effort is what counted regardless of the outcome; that no one is perfect; that when competing with perfection, one always loses; and what one does is judged separately from what one is. The largest gain here was observed to be that students and parents understood the latter; not passing a test does not mean that one is bad or inadequate. The repeated message for this group was, "Not passing a test provides you with opportunities for new goals. What goal would you like to make? What are the steps to achieving that goal? Now the students' minds are on how they will use their power in the future, rather than brooding over imperfection.

The "identity component" showed one student with possible deficiencies. Trying to look one's best everyday rated negatively while complimenting others often was increased. In addition, seven more students disagreed with the statement, "I very often wish I could be someone else."

Acceptance of self was a major goal of the intervention. Discussions were held concerning uniqueness. The room was filled with posters affirming the self. When the group analyzed a problem someone identified, they would separate the act from the student. Suggestions were given to students on what decisions would be more appropriate if the dilemmas occurred again. Openness of issues concerning individuals, their personal strengths and future goals for improvement were key. Everything was shared; what concerned one, concerned all. The students learned about one another and from one another. They learned about themselves. They shared differences and similarities. They shared opinions and gave advice in non-threatening ways. Out of this grew understanding, respect, concern and acceptance; acepptance of self and acceptance of others.

The number of students revealing possible "belonging" deficits decreased by two. On the positive side, all responded that they had two or more good friends and that their friends were not all like them. More noteworthy was an increased agreement that they were not frightened when people made fun of them. On the negative side, fewer felt that others wanted them to join their activities.

Having more friends and friends who were different in some way supports the growth in the previous component; acceptance of an individual's uniqueness opened up the minds of those who were closed before.

The intimidation factor dropped by over half, showing that learned techniques such as self-talk or direct rebuttal of a put-down had some effect on the perception of the victim. The student saw the intimidator as needy instead of someone to fear. Put-downs were discussed as well as the possible reasons for the put-down. The conclusion made by this group was that putting someone down does not build up one's positive feeling of self. Also, feelings taken away from that lesson, were that as a victim, one has power to make choices. Walking away, self-talk, and direct confrontation worked when students actually tried them. Closing out this lesson, one student made reference to a message he saw which said, "In taking revenge, you become your enemy's equal, in letting go, you become his superior."

It was indicated that more students felt that fewer classmates wanted them to join their activites. While this sentiment did not seem to be pervasive, the teacher can speak to possible reasons for such perception. The learning environment provided for numerous opportunities to pair, team or work in

cooperative groups, some settings structured by the teacher and some chosen at whim by the student. Choice of action was an integral part of life. This group may have been provided with many more occasions to choose a partner or two. Given this situation, it is understandable that some children were disappointed if their first choice for a partner was already taken.

In addition, because of the way that this class was structured, opening up the "whole" self for recognition of differences and understanding of negative actions, it is understandable that, at certain times, some children may not want to work with a particular classmate.

In the past, it was observed that teachers of these children have "enabled" negative behavior by glossing over a student's negative actions. This setting was different because students learned to recognize their imperfections, accept them, and move on to improvement through creating future goals. If inappropriate behavior in class or toward a student occured, both students were addressed. It was important for the teacher to help them validate each other's feelings and redirect their thinking.

One message often spoken to the student who precipitated inappropriate behavior was, "Who chose this action? Who controlled the decision ? What can you do differently next time? What needs to be changed here is what was done. We still accept you, it's the action you chose which does not belong in our classroom. Depending on the student's attitude and emotional state at the time, this dialogue may take place immediately or after some "cool-down" time. One message often spoken to the injured student was, "I'm sorry this happened. Johnny could have made a better behavior decision. Hopefully, you'll see a change as Johnny tries to make different choices in the future." Both students hear both messages. It is hoped that both see this behavior as changeable and that they have the power to make those changes for themselves.

Nothing notable was evidenced from the "competence" component. The number of children showing possible deficits remained the same and their responses did not differ to a great extent. This is not surprising as the last two components of self-esteem, competence and purpose, are usually fully developed during the high school years.

As in "competence," the last component, "purpose," revealed that the number of children with possible deficits remained the same. There were, however, responses which showed growth. These were: thinking about the future, making dreams come true, knowing what one wanted to be when one was grown, and agreeing that whether or not one succeeds is up to one's self. Further, answers showed that six more students thought about graduating from high school and college.

Due to the lessons on goal orientation, students may have been thinking more futuristically. It is gratifying to see an increase in the belief that one has some control over one's success or failure (Appendix N).

In summary, while the students' perceptions of other factors and possible threatening home and community environs are real, the solution strategies implemented in the school setting were the focus of this study. Students perceived the learning environment as physically safe; there was a notable decrease in the need to be perfect; there was growth in the acceptance of one's self (Appendix O); there was an increase in the belief that one can control feelings of intimidation; and the students adopted habit forming goal creation. These represent tremendous gains for this group in a five month period.

Chapter 6

DECISIONS ON THE FUTURE

The Solution Strategy

The data indicate that providing a learning environment conducive to the enhancement of self-esteem is beneficial. Enhancing or altering this classroom in future years will depend on the self-esteem and personalities of the students. Some of what was created emerged from the philosphy, goals, and successes of the teacher with past classes. Other methods of creating a conducive learning environment were used as a result of research and renewed awareness. The classroom was an adequate place to achieve the terminal objective, and reproducing this environment for future classes is an appropriate conclusion.

Students felt that this classroom is a non-threatening, uplifting, supportive place within the school. It is a place that students own, deciding much of what will occur and how. It is a place where all can take risks and can be supported enough that they wish to risk again. It is a learner-centered arena

created by and for children, and it is facilitated by a person who encourages positive self-esteem through empowerment and praise. It is a place where the facilitator learns with and from children. When children leave this place, they remember.

The series of lessons and activities that this group of students engaged in encouraged personal growth, stirred natural curiosity, and enabled more effective academic learning to take place. Most of the time was spent on enjoyable, effective learning, and many outside the environment were touched (Appendix P).

Through word of mouth other teachers tried some of the activities with their classes, parents became guinea pigs as students shared "awesome" discoveries, and families from differing neighborhoods were brought together.

Changes should be made in timelines. Two to three lessons per week, perhaps on the same theme, may accomplish just as much over the whole year. Thirty to forty-five minutes should be provided, depending on the activity, as sometimes the thirty minute segments at the end of the day felt rushed. Ending the day this way, however, was effective and uplifting.

On the whole, creating time in the week for lessons such as these is definitely worthwhile. Presenting thinking strategies that encourage positive

action enables effective social skills building, conflict resolution, and general mental health.

Additional Applications

These data are useful for this population. In the future, perhaps the pre and post surveys could be given to incoming fourth grade classes and recurring observations could be made. One aspect of this study has caused the teacher much concern. The physical safety surveys revealed increasing concern for safety at home and school, but most significantly in the neighborhood.

As part of recent additions to fourth grade curricula, police department social workers visited the class. They presented 45 minutes of instruction on conflict resolution and will return for three more sessions. Upon leaving, the expressed that they were impressed with the students, their knowledge, and their willingmess to share their feelings openly. They also acknowledged that the creative environment and empowering atmosphere were conducive for their goals. The teacher shared a brief statement about the self-esteem project and commented on the value of their presence in the classroom. They gave the teacher their "cards" and requested access to this paper and a time for further discussion.

A future application may involve a possible team teaching situation with a teacher of the behavior disordered, merging the two classes. As stated earlier in the text, included in the study were two children from the behavior disorder class. Their teacher, very supportive of the project, often followed up with a review of the lessons and once engaged her entire class in an activity (Appendix Q).

Dissemination of Data and Recommendations

In addition to sharing the reasearch with the police social workers, it has been requested that the teacher share a copy of this paper with the district's director of research. In addition, the teacher/researcher serves on the curriculum advisory council, chaired by the assistant superintendent. The teacher sees both of these situations as providing prime opportunities for initiating direct discussion on this topic. If key people show interest, this project may be replicated.

The teacher/researcher is willing to share the data and conclusions with interested parties. In fact, this was done while the project was in process, sharing materials and observations when asked to by a day care worker and a fifth grade student teacher. This project is highly recommended and perceived most effective.

This project and this special group of children have given the teacher/researcher gifts to impart to future students. She lovingly and respectfully thanks her class family for their praise and encouragement, their understanding, and their trust.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

We are going to fill out this survey together. I will read each statement for you out loud as you read it silently. After each item is read, decide how you feel **most of the time** about the statement, and circle one of the choices, "Agree" or "Disagree". There are no "right" or "wrong" answers.

EXAMPLE: I get nervous when I have to perform on stage in front of an audience.

If, most of the time, you get nervous when you have to perform on stage in front of an audience, circle the word, Agree.
If, most of the time, you do not get nervous when you have to perform on stage in front of an audience, circle the word, Disagree.

Agree	Disagree	1.	I like the neighborhood I live in; I feel safe there.
Agree	Disagree	2.	I like my home, and always feel safe there.
Agree	Disagree	3.	I like my school; I always feel safe here.
Agree	Disagree	4.	I'm not afraid of any student at school.
Agree	Disagree	5.	I don't go to the health clerk's office very much when I have a headache or a stomachache.
Agree	Disagree	6.	I always make good choices to keep my body healthy.
Agree	Disagree	7.	I have a healthy, strong, and fit body.
Agree	Disagree	8.	My parents discipline fairly.
Agree	Disagree	9.	I feel safe in each of my classes.
Agree	Disagree	10.	I'm not afraid of anyone in my neighborhood.

Date_____ ps

Adapted from Youngs, B. (1992). The 6 Vital ingredients of self-esteem. Rolling Hills Estates, California: Jalmar Press.

Agree	Disagree	1.	I feel I can be successful at things I do.
Agree	Disagree	2.	I am able to laugh at my own mistakes.
Agree	Disagree	3.	It helps to talk about my feelings.
Agree	Disagree	4.	I am my own best friend.
Agree	Disagree	5.	I expect good things to happen to me.
Agree	Disagree	6.	When I mess up, I just try to do it right the next time.
Agree	Disagree	7.	I give myself credit when I do something well.
Agree	Disagree	8.	I do not think it's important to do everything well.
Agree	Disagree	9.	I never make fun of others or tease them unfairly.
Agree	Disagree	10.	I know how to handle pressure.

Date_____es

Agree	Disagree	1.	I am a happy person.
Agree	Disagree	2.	I very often wish I could be someone else.
Agree	Disagree	3.	I like the way I look.
Agree	Disagree	4.	I like who I am.
Agree	Disagree	5.	I like my body.
Agree	Disagree	6.	I don't very often think that if I had more money and things I would be a lot happier and have more friends.
Agree	Disagree	7.	I try to look my best everyday.
Agree	Disagree	8.	When something good happens to me, I feel I deserve it.
Agree	Disagree	9.	I feel comfortable in new situations.
Agree	Disagree	10.	I compliment other people a lot.

Date_____i

Agree	Disagree	1.	I have two or more good friends.
Agree	Disagree	2.	When I need help, others are willing to help me.
Agree	Disagree	3.	People can trust me.
Agree	Disagree	4.	I'm happy for my friends, when good things happen to them.
Agree	Disagree	5.	I like most of the people I know.
Agree	Disagree	6.	I know how to be a friend to whomever I want to.
Agree	Disagree	7.	My friends are not all like me.
Agree	Disagree	8.	When people tease and make fun of me, I'm not frightened.
Agree	Disagree	9.	My friends know that I will compliment them when they have done something well or are wearing new clothes.
Agree	Disagree	10.	Others want me to join their activities.

Date_____b

Agree	Disagree	1.	I use my time wisely.
Agree	Disagree	2.	I can do whatever I set my mind to.
Agree	Disagree	3.	I ask for help when I need it.
Agree	Disagree	4.	I can make good decisions.
Agree	Disagree	5.	I'm a good listener.
Agree	Disagree	6.	I always try my best.
Agree	Disagree	7.	I can handle trying new situations.

Date_____c-3

Agree	Disagree	1.	I think a lot about how my future will be.
Agree	Disagree	2.	My life is meaningful.
Agree	Disagree	3.	Whether I succeed or fail is up to me.
Agree	Disagree	4.	I know that I will make future dreams come true.
Agree	Disagree	5.	I know what I want to be when I grow up.
Agree	Disagree	6.	I'm excited about my life now.
Agree	Disagree	7.	I look forward to my future.
Agree	Disagree	8.	I've thought about graduating from high school and college.
Agree	Disagree	9.	There are a lot of things I'm interested in.
Agree	Disagree	10.	I have goals for my life, and I'm going to achieve them.

Date_____p

Appendix B

COMMUNICATION LOG

This is a log from the first day of school until the first day of implementation of this project. Each child takes a folder home every Friday throughout the school year. The folder holds his papers from the week as well as a personal note from me to his parents. The folder is returned to me on Monday with notes from home. An individual child's academic progress, concerns about behaviors or work habits, and praise are documented here. Because of such documentation, this log will be used solely for the purpose of baseline data.

8-31-93 First day of school. A.K.'s mom stopped in to let me know that she switched her to our school because the other school had no limits or discipline.

A.M. was sent out of drama, gym, and homeroom today within a two hour period. I needed to speak with him in the hall three times.

9-1-93 First full day. Took A.M. to the phone to call Mom at work regarding behavior. She was very supportive. She said that she knows he has trouble with authority, always wanting to do what he wants, and every year she hears from the teacher the same things: he states, "I can't!" before beginning a task and he draws attention to himself with verbal outbursts or tantrums.

9-2-93 M.J. sits and does nothing.

9-8-93 Took M.J. to the phone to call mom at work. She told me that he was in a self-contained behavior disorder class in kindergarten. He came to our school last year. She seemed supportive and understood why I'd be calling. I requested that she come to school tomorrow to meet with me, M.J., and the social worker.

9-9-93 M.J.'s mom never showed.

M.D.'s mom called. He's having trouble sleeping at night trying to adjust to school. I understood and expected this due to his classroom placement in the past. He was used to virtually no structure,

expectation or discipline. I requested that she and M.D. come to meet with me tomorrow.

I phoned J.K.'s mom regarding staffing her. She is new to our school and is two years behind in all subjects.

9-10-93 M.D. and parents met with me at 7:30 this A.M. They affirmed me and we agreed it would take some time for him to adjust.

9-14-93 A child, A.M., came to our class at 1:00 today. His mother wanted him switched because she didn't want him in a split graded homeroom.

9-15-93 Phoned J.K.'s mom to let her know that the staffing was scheduled.

Spoke with M.B.'s mom. She was candid about M.'s enjoyment with teasing others.

9-17-93 A.K.'s mom called regarding the ability group that she was put into for math.

9-20-93 J.K.'s staffing was today. A speech and an L.D. screening is needed. An auditory processing difficulty is questioned. I phoned mom. She's supportive.

9-22-93 A.B. had to leave our school because he had been living in another city, while attending school here.

9-23-93 Took A.M. to the phone to call mom at work regarding behavior. She came to check on how the day went after school.

9-24-93 A.K.'s mom dropped in at 7:45 to ask advice about A.K.'s fear of her math teacher.

M.J. did no work and was defiant. I spoke with the principal, since I got no where with mom last time. He worked in the office for awhile. Wrote a not home telling his mom that he needs to know that she cares. He doesn't bring papers home because she doesn't care about his work. I asked her to contact me if she could support our efforts at school.

Received a one page letter from N.S.'s mom telling me that I'm creating a complex social problem for her be moving her seat away from a girl she's trying to get to

know. It took me 2 computer pages (single-spaced) and one hour to respond to her letter.

9-27-93 Spoke with P.K.'s mom because he's been forgetting to do his homework regularly. Her reply was that he's chronologically very young for fourth grade.

Got a note from M.C.'s mom telling me that while she doesn't "rescue" him, she wants me to know why his homework never got handed in.

Received two letters from the SSW telling me that he'd support me with M.J. and A.M. if I needed help.

9-28-93 M.J. was defiant again and did no work. I took him to the phone to call his mom. I put a message on the answering machine that she needs to find the time to get to school this week.

9-29-93 Spoke with H.S.'s mom on the phone. Math is difficult for her and they didn't know how to help. She doesn't listen or bring her book home.

G.E.'s dad arrives 5 min. before the A.M. bell. He's concerned about the fact that G.E. didn't get a paper he was supposed to get for homework. The child never listens and doesn't appear to care about or acknowledge any responsibility.

I got a written response from M.J.'s mom that she does care about his work. He had a wonderful A.M., so we went to the phone to call her at work. I requested again that she come to school this week to meet with us to plan, as she wasn't here for open house. She said she'd come Friday at 5:00 P.M. I kept M after school until she came. We spoke for 45 min. The principal checked in. She seemed to care and pledged support, but on Monday he came with no homework or emergency card (I gave her 2 more) that was due over a month ago.

Appendix C

PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Please read each statement and decide how you, as parents, feel **most of the time** about the issue. Please circle the appropriate response, "Agree" or "Disagree". If you **strongly**agree or disagree, please write "S" inside the circle.

When you have finished, please note the date on the bottom of each page and place the questionnaire in the manilla envelope provided. You or your child may deposit the sealed envelope in the box labeled "Questionnaire" in our classroom.

Please do not write your name on any part of the questionnaire. The information gathered for this project will be used solely for the purpose of developing an environment and activities to enhance the self-esteem of your child.

I appreciate your time, candor, and willingness to support me in my effort to be an enlightened, empathetic, and effective educator. Betsy Kuglin

Agree	Disagree	1.	Our neighborhood is a safe place.
Agree	Disagree	2.	My child's school is a safe place.
Agree	Disagree	3.	The school health clerk calls frequently regarding my child's health.
Agree	Disagree	4.	Our family is health conscious.
Agree	Disagree	5.	Exercise is a priority in our family.
Agree	Disagree	6.	My child often needs to be disciplined with more than words.
Agree	Disagree	7.	Our family finds it easy to laugh at mistakes.
Agree	Disagree	8.	Our family talks about feelings often.
Agree	Disagree	9.	Our family looks on the bright side of a problem more often than not.

Agree Disagree 10. Our family praises each other for accomplishments.

Agree Disagree 11. Our family strives to do everything well.

Agree Disagree 12. All of our family members are treated fairly.

Agree Disagree 13. Our child frequently knows about a major family stress.

Agree Disagree 14. Our family takes pride in its identity.

Agree Disagree 15. We like to buy the latest clothes and gadgets.

Agree Disagree 16. We feel we deserve good things to happen to us.

Agree Disagree 17. We feel confident in new situations.

Agree Disagree 18. We frequently compliment others.

Agree Disagree 19. We can count on two or more close friends for help, if needed.

Agree Disagree 20. We can be counted on.

Agree Disagree 21. We think that most people are likeable.

Agree Disagree 22. Our friends are not all like we are.

Agree Disagree 23. We believe in setting goals.

Agree Disagree 24. We tackle problems one step at a time.

Agree Disagree 25. Our family makes good decisions.

Agree	Disagree	26.	Our family listens to each other.
Agree	Disagree	27.	We believe that effort is more important than achievement.
Agree	Disagree	28.	Our family feels able to cope with challenges.
Agree	Disagree	29.	We think about the future frequently.
Agree	Disagree	30.	We believe that you can do anything that you put your mind to.
Agree	Disagree	31.	We have lots of interests.
Agree	Disagree	32.	We look forward to the future.

Date_____

If you wish, please use the remaining space to comment on how you perceive your child feels on any of the above issues. Once again, thank you for sharing you thoughts and your treasures, your children!

Appendix D

PERSONAL EVALUATION
OF
SELF-ESTEEM ACTIVITIES

Name_____

Date_____

Name of
Activity_____

I learned_____

_____

I felt_____

_____

What I'd like to change about this activity is_____

_____

Appendix E

PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

Please read each statement and decide how you, as parents, feel **most of the time** about the issue. Please circle the appropriate response, "Agree" or "Disagree". If you **strongly** agree or disagree, please write "S" inside the circle.

When you have finished, please note the date on the bottom of each page and place the questionnaire in the manilla envelope provided. You or your child may deposit the sealed envelope in the box labeled "Questionnaire" in our classroom.

Please do not write your name on any part of the questionnaire. The information gathered for this project will be used solely for the purpose of developing an environment and activities to enhance the self-esteem of your child.

I appreciate your time, candor, and willingness to support me in my effort to be an enlightened, empathetic, and effective educator.

15	Agree	5	Disagree	1. Our neighborhood is a safe place.
19	Agree	0	Disagree	2. My child's school is a safe place.
5	Agree	13	Disagree	3. The school health clerk calls frequently regarding my child's health.
17	Agree	2	Disagree	4. Our family is health conscious.
15	Agree	5	Disagree	5. Exercise is a priority in our family.
3	Agree	17	Disagree	6. My child often needs to be disciplined with more than words.
14	Agree	6	Disagree	7. Our family finds it easy to laugh at mistakes.
19	Agree	1	Disagree	8. Our family talks about feelings often.
14	Agree	5	Disagree	9. Our family looks on the bright side of a problem more often than not.

19	Agree 0	Disagree	10.	Our family praises each other for accomplishments.
15	Agree 2	Disagree	11.	Our family strives to do everything well.
18	Agree 1	Disagree	12.	All of our family members are treated fairly.
17	Agree 6	Disagree	13.	Our child frequently knows about a major family stress.
19	Agree 0	Disagree	14.	Our family takes pride in its identity.
7	Agree 10	Disagree	15.	We like to buy the latest clothes and gadgets.
18	Agree 1	Disagree	16.	We feel we deserve good things to happen to us.
17	Agree 1	Disagree	17.	We feel confident in new situations.
18	Agree 0	Disagree	18.	We frequently compliment others.
17	Agree 2	Disagree	19.	We can count on two or more close friends for help, if needed.
19	Agree 0	Disagree	20.	We can be counted on.
18	Agree 1	Disagree	21.	We think that most people are likeable.
16	Agree 3	Disagree	22.	Our friends are not all like we are.
16	Agree 2	Disagree	23.	We believe in setting goals.
17	Agree 2	Disagree	24.	We tackle problems one step at a time.
17	Agree 1	Disagree	25.	Our family makes good decisions.

15	Agree	1	Disagree	26. Our family listens to each other.
14	Agree	2	Disagree	27. We believe that effort is more important than achievement.
15	Agree	1	Disagree	28. Our family feels able to cope with challenges.
13	Agree	2	Disagree	29. We think about the future frequently.
15	Agree	0	Disagree	30. We believe that you can do anything that you put your mind to.
12	Agree	3	Disagree	31. We have lots of interests.
15	Agree	0	Disagree	32. We look forward to the future.

Date_____

If you wish, please use the remaining space to comment on how you perceive your child feels on any of the above issues. Once again, thank you for sharing you thoughts and your treasures, your children!

Appendix G

OUR CLASS PLEDGE

I PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE
TO MS. RUGEN'S CLASS OF '94,
TO ANDREWS SCHOOL,
AND TO OUR FLAG
WHICH WILL STAY HERE
FOR ALL RUGEN'S CLASSES.

NO STRESS, ONLY SELF-CONFIDENCE;
ALWAYS GIVE SUPPORT.
JUDGE NOT BY SKIN, STRENGTH, SIZE, OR MONEY,
BUT BY HEART, MIND, AND KINDNESS,
FOR CLASS OF RUGEN '94.

23	Agree	2	Disagree	1. I feel I can be successful at things I do.
15	Agree	10	Disagree	2. I am able to laugh at my own mistakes.
15	Agree	10	Disagree	3. It helps to talk about my feelings.
17	Agree	8	Disagree	4. I am my own best friend.
20	Agree	5	Disagree	5. I expect good things to happen to me.
24	Agree	1	Disagree	6. When I mess up, I just try to do it right the next time.
18	Agree	7	Disagree	7. I give myself credit when I do something well.
11	Agree	14	Disagree	8. I do not think it's important to do everything well.
16	Agree	9	Disagree	9. I never make fun of others or tease them unfairly.
20	Agree	5	Disagree	10. I know how to handle pressure.

Date_____es

22	Agree	3	Disagree	1. I am a happy person.
17	Agree	8	Disagree	2. I very often wish I could be someone else.
20	Agree	5	Disagree	3. I like the way I look.
24	Agree	1	Disagree	4. I like who I am.
23	Agree	2	Disagree	5. I like my body.
18	Agree	7	Disagree	6. I don't very often think that if I had more money and things I would be a lot happier and have more friends.
23	Agree	2	Disagree	7. I try to look my best everyday.
21	Agree	4	Disagree	8. When something good happens to me, I feel I deserve it.
17	Agree	8	Disagree	9. I feel comfortable in new situations.
16	Agree	9	Disagree	10. I compliment other people a lot.

Date_____i

23	Agree	2	Disagree	1. I have two or more good friends.
21	Agree	4	Disagree	2. When I need help, others are willing to help me.
23	Agree	2	Disagree	3. People can trust me.
25	Agree	0	Disagree	4. I'm happy for my friends, when good things happen to them.
20	Agree	5	Disagree	5. I like most of the people I know.
22	Agree	3	Disagree	6. I know how to be a friend to whomever I want to.
21	Agree	4	Disagree	7. My friends are not all like me.
16	Agree	9	Disagree	8. When people tease and make fun of me, I'm not frightened.
22	Agree	3	Disagree	9. My friends know that I will compliment them when they have done something well or are wearing new clothes.
22	Agree	3	Disagree	10. Others want me to join their activities.

Date_____b

22	Agree	3	Disagree	1. I use my time wisely.
21	Agree	4	Disagree	2. I can do whatever I set my mind to.
21	Agree	4	Disagree	3. I ask for help when I need it.
24	Agree	1	Disagree	4. I can make good decisions.
21	Agree	4	Disagree	5. I'm a good listener.
24	Agree	1	Disagree	6. I always try my best.
22	Agree	3	Disagree	7. I can handle trying new situations.

Date_____c-3

19	Agree	6	Disagree	1. I think a lot about how my future will be.
23	Agree	2	Disagree	2. My life is meaningful.
19	Agree	6	Disagree	3. Whether I succeed or fail is up to me.
18	Agree	7	Disagree	4. I know that I will make future dreams come true.
21	Agree	4	Disagree	5. I know what I want to be when I grow up.
20	Agree	5	Disagree	6. I'm excited about my life now.
23	Agree	2	Disagree	7. I look forward to my future.
14	Agree	11	Disagree	8. I've thought about graduating from high school and college.
25	Agree	0	Disagree	9. There are a lot of things I'm interested in.
22	Agree	3	Disagree	10. I have goals for my life, and I'm going to achieve them.

Date_____p

Appendix K

POST-SURVEY RESULTS

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

We are going to fill out this survey together. I will read each statement for you out loud as you read it silently. After each item is read, decide how you feel most of the time about the statement, and circle one of the choices, "Agree" or "Disagree". There are no "right" or "wrong" answers.

EXAMPLE: I get nervous when I have to perform on stage in front of an audience.

If, most of the time, you get nervous when you have to perform on stage in front of an audience, circle the word, Agree.
If, most of the time, you do not get nervous when you have to perform on stage in front of an audience, circle the word, Disagree.

17	Agree	8	Disagree	1. I like the neighborhood I live in; I feel safe there.
20	Agree	5	Disagree	2. I like my home, and always feel safe there.
19	Agree	6	Disagree	3. I like my school; I always feel safe here.
14	Agree	11	Disagree	4. I'm not afraid of any student at school.
16	Agree	9	Disagree	5. I don't go to the health clerk's office very much when I have a headache or a stomachache.
22	Agree	3	Disagree	6. I always make good choices to keep my body healthy.
25	Agree	0	Disagree	7. I have a healthy, strong, and fit body.
19	Agree	7	Disagree	8. My parents discipline fairly.
25	Agree	0	Disagree	9. I feel safe in each of my classes.
16	Agree	9	Disagree	10. I'm not afraid of anyone in my neighborhood.

Date_____ ps

Adapted from Youngs, B. (1992). The 6 vital ingredients of self-esteem . Rolling Hills Estates, California: Jalmar Press.

24	Agree	1	Disagree	1. I feel I can be successful at things I do.
17	Agree	8	Disagree	2. I am able to laugh at my own mistakes.
16	Agree	9	Disagree	3. It helps to talk about my feelings.
16	Agree	9	Disagree	4. I am my own best friend.
21	Agree	4	Disagree	5. I expect good things to happen to me.
24	Agree	1	Disagree	6. When I mess up, I just try to do it right the next time.
24	Agree	1	Disagree	7. I give myself credit when I do something well.
18	Agree	7	Disagree	8. I do not think it's important to do everything well.
14	Agree	11	Disagree	9. I never make fun of others or tease them unfairly.
21	Agree	4	Disagree	10. I know how to handle pressure.

Date_____es

21	Agree	4	Disagree	1. I am a happy person.
10	Agree	15	Disagree	2. I very often wish I could be someone else.
21	Agree	4	Disagree	3. I like the way I look.
22	Agree	3	Disagree	4. I like who I am.
21	Agree	4	Disagree	5. I like my body.
16	Agree	9	Disagree	6. I don't very often think that if I had more money and things I would be a lot happier and have more friends.
20	Agree	5	Disagree	7. I try to look my best everyday.
21	Agree	4	Disagree	8. When something good happens to me, I feel I deserve it.
17	Agree	8	Disagree	9. I feel comfortable in new situations.
19	Agree	6	Disagree	10. I compliment other people a lot.

Date_____i

25	Agree 0	Disagree	1.	I have two or more good friends.
20	Agree 5	Disagree	2.	When I need help, others are willing to help me.
23	Agree 2	Disagree	3.	People can trust me.
24	Agree 1	Disagree	4.	I'm happy for my friends, when good things happen to them.
20	Agree 5	Disagree	5.	I like most of the people I know.
22	Agree 3	Disagree	6.	I know how to be a friend to whomever I want to.
23	Agree 2	Disagree	7.	My friends are not all like me.
21	Agree 4	Disagree	8.	When people tease and make fun of me, I'm not frightened.
23	Agree 2	Disagree	9.	My friends know that I will compliment them when they have done something well or are wearing new clothes.
18	Agree 7	Disagree	10.	Others want me to join their activities.

Date_____b

19 Agree	6 Disagree	1.	I use my time wisely.
23 Agree	2 Disagree	2.	I can do whatever I set my mind to.
23 Agree	2 Disagree	3.	I ask for help when I need it.
24 Agree	1 Disagree	4.	I can make good decisions.
22 Agree	3 Disagree	5.	I'm a good listener.
21 Agree	4 Disagree	6.	I always try my best.
23 Agree	2 Disagree	7.	I can handle trying new situations.

Date_____c-3

22	Agree	3	Disagree	1. I think a lot about how my future will be.
20	Agree	5	Disagree	2. My life is meaningful.
22	Agree	3	Disagree	3. Whether I succeed or fail is up to me.
20	Agree	5	Disagree	4. I know that I will make future dreams come true.
18	Agree	7	Disagree	5. I know what I want to be when I grow up.
20	Agree	5	Disagree	6. I'm excited about my life now.
23	Agree	2	Disagree	7. I look forward to my future.
20	Agree	5	Disagree	8. I've thought about graduating from high school and college.
22	Agree	3	Disagree	9. There are a lot of things I'm interested in.
23	Agree	2	Disagree	10. I have goals for my life, and I'm going to achieve them.

Date_____p

1-31-94 - * We did a "Good Kid/Bad Kid" Kinesiology Demonstration.
(Day 52) (100 Ways to Develop a Student's S.E. & Responsibility)
* A Volunteer came up to the front & held his arm straight out to his side, shoulder level. I put force on top of his wrist, as he resisted. = base strength.
* He closed his eyes & repeated 8 times: "I'm a bad kid."
* We did the arm experiment & his arm fell.
* He closed his eyes & repeated 8 times, "I'm a great kid."
* Once again, & his strength was restored. * Got into pairs for all to try.
* This lesson clearly showed the power our thinking (pos. or neg.) has over our bodies. It was a great lesson & they were impressed.
* On next page is info. regarding this.

Kinesiology is a form of muscle testing that chiropractors and other health professionals employ for diagnostic purposes. The technique is also useful in exploring the relationship of thoughts to physiological strength. When we think negative thoughts about ourselves or talk to ourselves in negative ways, we weaken the body's physiology. Negative thinking does, indeed, have a negative effect on how we feel and our ability to perform. Similarly, negative images of the past or the future also produce a negative effect. The following exercise dramatically demonstrates just how powerful these negative thoughts can be.

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DA414- 10/22/93

Back to Kids' 5-c, this was our first "By Invitation Only" (B.I.O.) night. I opened my room up from 6-8 p.m. The children each made personal invitations + invited friends + family who they wanted to share their learning environment with. I sat in the hall. The power + focus was totally the students. The turnout was: 7 students, 4 Moms, 3 Dads, 3 sisters, 2 friends from our school, 2 friends from another dist. school, 2 adult friends. = (23) - I enjoyed listening as parents questioned + kids excitedly showed their books, papers, etc. The computer was on, the World Wizard was used, "Mankala", the African game we learned, was being played. Parents leisurely walked + browsed + interacted. It was wonderful! I was to lock up at 8:00 (2hrs.), but the last to leave left at 8:40. They can't wait til next month.

(cont.)

I did this - opening the room once a mo. for 2 hrs. / nite as a part of hoping to increase student self-esteem. Parental involvement, especially physically being there, is a gift they give their child for a lifetime of memories.

DAY 9 - 10/15/93

* M.J. has reached his goal of 35 clock hours of no negative attention from teacher. He was voted "Good Egg" 2 weeks in a row & we shall celebrate our class support of him on Monday. We planned a "M.J." party at noon, when he wanted it. Some will bring refreshments. We'll play a game. He invited his 1st. grade brother, Mom, principal, SSW, and lunchroom supervisor. Everyone sees a new child & is elated to have a party for class support of him! He has tossed his "total loner" attitude (& apathetic) around. He is a care taker of the environment & of classmates & teacher. His work is impeccably done. He went from only doing 1/2 a spelling test 3 weeks ago to getting a perfect paper today! He brought me a skeleton ring. He's very attentive to my needs. He's acting more responsibly to his work & he seems to be happy & others are getting to know him differently ~ we discussed this as a class. I wish his Mom would follow-through & support him more. He looks like he's gets very little sleep. Correspondence with her is slow to move. Takes lots of my effort.

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DAY 15 - 10/25/93

+ At noon today, we celebrated A.M. reaching his goal. BC gave him the 2 pencils sent from home and I read a letter from a teacher who he invited, but couldn't make it. She also sent him a picture of herself with her thumbs up + wrote a cute caption. BOTH of his parents came from their work and his 2nd. gr. sister also did. She horn blew, balloons waved, hats were decorated; treat → the kids brought. It was another wonderful class family celebration for working together to support A.M. The SSW + principal were also invited + were there. AM's Mom + Dad were so pleased + so proud. They've stood by him + worked with his teachers for years. Something is working now. As she was leaving, AM's Mom told me that she asked him last night what has made the difference for him and his reply was, "I guess it's the self-esteem."

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DAY 7 - 10/1/93

9/3/93

How [redacted] this year
[redacted] didn't have a
of A's. And now I'm getting to
know you. It was a little worried
because I was
very glad to be in my class
and I'm not one of the
trouble makers from last year
[redacted]. I had trouble
with him last year some
times my mom used and had
to go to his principle about
it. But now I know you
will take care of that. I'm
looking forward to this year.
Cause I like you alot.

Well, [redacted], I'm getting to know
you, too. I like you a lot, also.
You have a wonderfully strong
handshake & a great ability to
communicate your thoughts both
verbally & in writing. I'm sorry
about what happened to you

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in the past and I'm very happy that you are looking forward to the future because that's the only thing we can change. We are all a part of a special group. Our class will become like a family because we will be all working very closely with every other member of the class. We need to remember that everybody has trouble at sometime in his life, but people are good inside. It takes a bit longer to get to know what's inside the person. Usually we can see the trouble part right away. I can tell that you will be a person who I can count on to act responsibly and help others. Even the ones who may cause trouble. I'm glad you're here & I'm happy to know you!

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DAY-2- 10/1/93

& Today was Friday. Every Friday P.M. the students nominate 5 people for the "Good Egg" award. Today M.J. received the most votes. Everyone clapped. It was magical! M.J. is a loner. He never wants to play, participate, take gym with, or walk with the class. With behav. mod. sup. & parent support, M.J. is beginning to smile, laugh, share, & want to be an active member of our class family. I'm so happy for him & for all of us. M.J. was in a B.D. class for his kindergarten year, in another district. This will be the best year of his life, I know.

DAY 60- 2/4/94

* M.J. - the one who wanted no part of any group until October, and who's had a history of being a loner, is really basking in our class family sunlight! Anyone who enters the class, he takes over to our flag + explains the symbols to them. Also, today at bus duty after school, he said, "Mrs. Kruger, they didn't cheer." It seems I was in the room getting my coat + the bell rang for dismissal + my kids were in the hall. We always cheer each other at the end of the day + because I wasn't there, they left when the bell rang. I guess MJ said, "we need to cheer, first!" Magical.

DAY 55- 1/27/94

* An aside: AN's mom told me that when he achieved his last goal (class party in his honor), he told her the night before, "Mom, I really didn't believe I could do it, but it's like Ms. Leger says, 'You can do anything you put your mind to!'"

February 14, 1994

Dear Me,

How are you? Because I know I am. Did you know if you think good touths about your self it will come ture, or atest that is what I think. If you don't do good the fuist time try a gain in till your wen. we think your doing swell.

When you are alone you should really *self take. day when done and tuned your feial think that not there No matter what an one thinks of you I like you just the way you are. I love you [redacted] happy Valentine's day

*"self-talk"

your favrot frund [redacted]

ps your very very nice!

2-3-94- Day 59

* A mom stopped by + we chatted about things. She told me that "this S.E. stuff has got me thinking." She was requesting feedback at her job downtown (I think banking). Her statement to her co-worker was. "I need to know what you think of my work or it will affect my self-esteem." This is BC's mom. She + his sister did a family "Praise" sheet for him + his 1st. grade-age sister. Magical!

10/22/93

Betsy -

I told my class, we needed to work together to help [redacted] + [redacted] do the assignment they were missing in homeroom. They were happy to help.

First, we talked about stress - the discussion was brief but they got the point. Then, they brainstormed as a group the following responses:

What can cause CHILDREN stress?

- being teased
- getting beat up
- too much homework from the teacher
- having to stay inside until homework is done.

- arguing with friends.
- doing the dishes, taking out the garbage, Chores.
- when people talk about me
- too tired to do things you are told to do.

Then we talked about how adults have different things that cause them stress. Their examples were: - making dinner when the kids are complaining.
- worries about money.
- arguing with boyfriends.
- the children doing well in school.

Thanks for your ideas. We enjoyed [redacted] them.

Nancy

They will finish the "circle of friends sheet" Monday.